

**WESTMINSTER TRAFFIC COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
March 25, 2008**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Westminster Traffic Commission was called to order by Vice Chairman Diep on Tuesday, March 25, 2008, at 5:32 p.m. at the City Council Chambers, 8200 Westminster Boulevard, Westminster, California.

SALUTE TO FLAG

Commissioner Lopez led the members of the audience in the Salute to the Flag.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Diep, Crozier, Lopez,
Tran (arrived at 5:40 pm)
Commissioners Absent: Tracy

STAFF PRESENT

Adolfo Ozaeta, Civil Engineering Associate; Sgt. Mark Nye, Westminster Police Department; Veronica Johnson, Secretary

**APPROVAL OF
MINUTES**

The approval of the minutes of the Traffic Commission's regular meetings of January 29, 2008 and February 20, 2008, was deferred to the next Traffic Commission meeting.

**ITEMS TO BE
CONSIDERED**

The first item to be considered at this evening's meeting was T.C. 75-123, staff's proposal to deny the request to rescind a passenger loading zone on the east side of Monroe Street between 18th Street and 19th Street (Liberty Park).

**T.C. 77-123
Monroe Street between
18th Street and 19th Street**

Mr. Ozaeta explained that at the January 29, 2008 Traffic Commission meeting, Nancy Sallee, 8232 18th Street, requested that staff investigate the reason the loading zone at Liberty Park exists. Mr. Ozaeta informed the Commission that the loading zone was installed after improvements to the park and the addition of the skateboard park. After the skateboard park was installed, no additional parking was added to the park. According to the original Traffic Commission Report concerning the installation of the loading zone, residents throughout the City were dropping off their children at this location resulting in several vehicles being double parked throughout the day.

Ms. Sallee and the Commission asked staff to investigate whether the loading zone was still useful to the community or

if abandoning it and returning it to general parking was more beneficial.

Staff observed the location at different hours of the day during the week and found that the park is not generating as much traffic as it used to and the children going to the park are generally walking or riding their bicycles or skateboards. The loading zone is used as a pick-up and drop-off location by the Westminster School District. In speaking with District officials, staff learned that children in this area are bused to other areas of the district and the loading zone has become beneficial to the community as the bus is able to park there safely.

STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION

Mr. Ozaeta explained to the Commission that based on the use of the loading zone by the residents and the school district as a pick-up and drop-off location for the school bus, staff recommended that the Traffic Commission deny the request for the removal of the subject passenger loading zone. If the loading zone were removed, the bus is likely to continue parking at the location since it has been established as the de facto pick-up location, and would then likely see an interruption in traffic in the north-south direction because the bus would have to double park to load the children.

Commissioner Lopez asked whether the Parks and Recreation Department has a fun bus that uses the area in the summer. Mr. Ozaeta responded that he was not sure if they used the street in question but knew that they do use La Pat. Mr. Ozaeta reminded the Commission that it is the day to day activities that the markings are intended for, not special events.

Vice Chairman Diep opened this item up for discussion.

Aida Koless, 8232 20th Street, spoke in favor of not rescinding the loading zone. Ms. Koless was concerned about the school children who are picked up and dropped off at the subject location if the loading zone was removed. She stated that there was an issue with double parking in that area. Ms. Koless suggested making the loading zone a no parking zone but wondered whether that would affect the school buses.

Mr. Ozaeta clarified for Ms. Koless the purpose of a loading zone is to give people an opportunity to stop, load and unload, and move on. If the area were to be a no parking zone, people stopping to unload would be in violation of the

law. It would also exclude the buses from stopping. Mr. Ozaeta explained that if the Commission decided to not rescind the loading zone, the City would refresh the loading zone and bring it up to standards.

In response to Commissioner Crozier's question, Sgt. Nye clarified for the Commission that twenty minutes is the limit for a loading zone unless marked otherwise and it is for the purpose of loading and unloading, not for parking. If people park and leave the vehicle, they would be in violation.

Mr. Ozaeta clarified for Commissioner Tran that the school and the community has designated this location as a pick-up and drop-off location. Removing the loading zone and making the area available for parking would force the buses to stop in the thru-lane if cars were parked at the park overnight. This was the basis for staff's recommendation to not rescind the loading zone. The original reason for the installation of the loading zone was that the Skatepark was popular when it first opened and there was a lot of pick-up and drop-off activity at the park.

Commissioner Lopez inquired whether staff could mark the area with the twenty minute limit. Mr. Ozaeta replied that he would verify what the vehicle code states. Sgt. Nye recommended against posting the time limit because you do not want people staying in the loading zone longer than necessary.

Motion

Commissioner Crozier moved to approve staff's recommendation; seconded by Commissioner Lopez.

Vote

The motion carried by a 4-0-1 vote with Chairman Tracy being absent.

The second item to be considered at this evening's meeting was T.C. 08-100, staff's proposal to deny the request for the installation of an all-way stop sign at the intersection of Grey Oaks Street and Duke Drive.

***T.C. 08-100
Grey Oaks Street and
Duke Drive***

Mr. Ozaeta reported that staff had received a verbal request from Ms. Margaret Cummings, 15722 Grey Oaks Street, to install an all-way stop at this location. Ms. Cummings had originally requested speed humps throughout the community. The reasoning behind the request for an all-way stop versus speed humps is that the City is respecting the

Orange County Fire Authority's request to not install speed humps in the City. Cities that do have them installed delay the response time for emergency vehicles, forcing them to speed up and slow down when responding to calls. Staff has decided to place a moratorium on the installation of speed humps until a better design is approved. In discussing this with Ms. Cummings, she thought a stop sign at the intersection may alleviate the speeding and the cut through traffic in the community. Ms. Cummings expressed her concerns to the Mayor and City Council during a Council meeting in February 2008.

Mr. Ozaeta explained to the Commission the layout of the community. Mr. Ozaeta further explained to the Commission the guidelines for installing all-way stops found in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The intersection does not warrant an all-way stop sign according to the guidelines.

Mr. Ozaeta informed the Commission that a stealth radar unit was placed at this intersection. Sgt. Nye explained the operation of the stealth radar unit which was placed on Duke Drive at the far west end of the park and left there for a period of 32 hours. It monitors the speed of every vehicle. Eighty-five percent of all the vehicles that traveled through the subject roadway were traveling 30 miles per hour and lower.

STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION

Mr. Ozaeta stated that staff's recommendation was to deny the request for all-way stop signs at this intersection. Mr. Ozaeta further commented that similar requests in other communities have led to the installation of unwarranted stop signs.

Vice Chairman Diep opened this item up for discussion.

Margaret Cummings, 15722 Grey Oaks Street, spoke in favor of the installation of an all-way stop. Ms. Cummings expressed her concern over the speed of the vehicles through the community. She had originally requested speed humps and pointed out that Vermont Street has speed humps. Ms. Cummings noted that there have been many accidents at the intersection even if they were not reported. She herself has been involved in an accident at the intersection.

Mr. Ozaeta mentioned that the community had been notified of tonight's meeting and staff had received six phone calls, four in favor of traffic control of some sort, and two opposed to the installation of a stop sign.

Commissioner Lopez stated that Ms. Cummings requested speed humps, not a stop sign. Mr. Ozaeta clarified that Ms. Cummings had requested speed humps but staff had not brought speed humps to the Commission at the request of the Orange County Fire Authority. Ms. Cummings wanted something done; staff suggested an all-way stop sign, though the MUTCD states they are not to be used for speed control.

Sgt. Nye clarified for Commissioner Lopez that the stealth radar was set up with the lowest speed being ten miles per hour and the highest speed at 70 miles per hour. It would pick up anyone traveling between those speeds. The highest speed that was picked up was 40 miles per hour. Less than five people were traveling at 40 miles per hour out of the 655 vehicles.

Mr. Ozaeta noted that this community is not a logical area for cut through traffic because of the winding roads. Typically, the speeding is generated by people of the community.

Mr. Ozaeta mentioned the possibility of placing a speed trailer at the intersection periodically. Sgt. Nye explained that the speed trailer would show the speed of vehicles as they approached. It could deter speeding because people will note that the speed is being monitored in the area.

Vice Chairman Diep suggested that the Commission either approve placing a speed trailer at the intersection or defer the item approximately six months to allow for further study. Commissioner Tran suggested placing signs in the area or markings telling vehicles to slow down. Commissioner Lopez agreed with Sgt. Nye's suggestion of placing the speed trailer in the community and bringing the item back in about six months.

MOTION

Motion was made by Commissioner Lopez to approve staff's recommendation to deny the installation of an all-way stop at the intersection of Grey Oaks Street and Duke Drive; seconded by Commissioner Crozier.

VOTE

The motion carried by a 4-0-1 vote with Chairman Tracy being absent.

Motion was made by Commissioner Tran to bring the item back in three months; seconded by Commissioner Lopez.

The motion carried by a 4-0-1 vote with Chairman Tracy absent.

The third item to be considered at this evening's meeting was T.C. 89-113, staff's proposal to deny the installation of an all-way stop sign at the intersection of Melanie Lane and Via Fortuna.

***T.C. 89-113
Melanie Lane and
Via Fortuna***

Mr. Ozaeta reported that staff had received a verbal request from Mr. Brad Sublett, Director of Operations for Los Alisos Ranch Company, for an all-way stop at the subject intersection. Mr. Sublett was concerned with speeding along Melanie Lane and the safe crossing of pedestrians.

Mr. Ozaeta explained the layout of the community to the Commission. Springdale and Garden Grove Boulevard carry a large amount of traffic but there is no interaction between both streets. There is a great demand for people to travel in both directions on Springdale and Garden Grove. Currently, there are signs indicating to drivers to use Melanie Lane to get to Springdale from Garden Grove and vice versa. In actuality, people are using the parking lot of the Ice Palace to perform the same maneuver. Staff had thought it was an illegal maneuver, but Sgt. Nye confirmed that it is legal as long as the maneuver is performed safely.

Mr. Ozaeta stated that there is currently a development being planned at Dorothy Drive and Melanie Lane. He also noted that the Ice Palace is also being redeveloped into RV sales. If the redevelopment does occur, the traffic on Melanie Lane would increase because the available cut-through would be eliminated.

Mr. Ozaeta explained to the Commission that the subject location does not warrant an all-way stop according to the MUTCD. Mr. Ozaeta further explained that the intersection has been addressed in the past with the installation of red curb 50 feet east and west and north and south of the driveway.

STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION

Staff's recommendation was to deny the installation of an all-way stop sign at the subject location.

Vice Chairman Diep opened this item up for discussion.

The following residents spoke in favor of the installation of an all-way stop at the subject location:

Brad Sublett, 13070 Old Bolsa Chica Road

Daisy Lindstedt, 5772 Garden Grove Blvd., #411

Martha Cochlin, 5772 Garden Grove Blvd, #105

The reasons for their support included personally seeing children being hit by vehicles; commenting that the two communities consist of over one thousand vehicles; the only access from Sequoia School to the Garden Grove Freeway is through Melanie Lane; there are no stop signs for the school children to get from the school to their homes; and the employees use golf carts to travel between the two parks and have almost been hit by vehicles while trying to cross the street.

Mr. Ozaeta clarified that there are no traffic control devices on Melanie Lane from Springdale to Garden Grove. Commissioner Crozier commented that the visibility on Melanie Lane is poor.

Mr. Sublett informed the Commission that they plan to gate all the entrances to the park and if it is approved by the City Council, the access gate will be used as an entrance and exit for residents. Currently it is used by employees who drive golf carts between both parks.

Mr. Ozaeta clarified that the speed limit on Melanie Lane is 25 miles per hour. Sgt. Nye noted that there are two large trees that obscure vision coming and going from the park. Mr. Ozaeta further noted that vehicles traveling on Melanie do not expect a driveway there.

Mr. Ozaeta suggested bringing the item back when the redevelopment of the Ice Palace is complete.

Commissioner Tran suggested installing a crosswalk at the subject intersection. Mr. Ozaeta replied that a crosswalk without traffic control devices causes more problems since it provides a false sense of security. If the concern is for pedestrians, a stop sign would be more beneficial than a marked crosswalk.

Discussion ensued about the planned senior development and the redevelopment of the Ice Palace.

MOTION

Motion was made by Commissioner Tran to approve staff's recommendation to deny an all-way stop sign at Melanie Lane and Via Fortuna; seconded by Vice Chairman Diep.

VOTE

The motion failed by a 2-2-1 vote with Chairman Tracy being absent.

Mr. Ozaeta suggested bringing the item back next month when there is a full Commission and asked whether the Commission or Mr. Sublett had any suggestions as to what staff should investigate further. In the meantime, traffic counters and a stealth radar will be placed in the area and the pedestrian traffic will be investigated.

Vice Chairman Diep excused himself at 7:07 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

There were no "New Business" items presented to the Commission at tonight's meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

There were no "Old Business" items presented to the Commission at tonight's meeting.

**INFORMATION
AND REPORTS**

There were no "Information and Reports" items presented to the Commission at tonight's meeting.

**ORAL
COMMUNICATIONS**

No one spoke during "Oral Communications" at tonight's meeting.

**WRITTEN
COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no "Written Communications" presented to the Commission at tonight's meeting.

**ITEMS COMMISSIONERS/
STAFF MAY WISH TO
DISCUSS**

Mr. Ozaeta informed the Commission that the new traffic signals at Newland and Oasis and Edwards and Trask will be turned on tomorrow. The protected left turns at Westminster and All American will also be uncovered tomorrow. The other two signals, Goldenwest and Hazard and Goldenwest and Trask, will be uncovered on Thursday. Springdale and Iroquois and Springdale and Meinhardt are still on the traffic signal priority list.

Commissioner Tran mentioned that he may be 5-10 minutes late to the Traffic Commission meetings due to work.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marwan Youssef
Public Works Director/City Engineer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Veronica Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

By: Veronica Johnson
Secretary